

Guidelines for Abstract/Poster Submissions for 2023 NCB-AALAS Symposium



Share your research and ideas with the laboratory animal science community and compete for a chance to win cash awards and ribbons! All submissions should reflect the mission and spirit of NCB-AALAS. Previously presented abstracts/posters are welcome. Awards will be given for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place posters, and there will be a “People’s Choice” award for the poster that gets the most votes from meeting attendees.

Abstracts and posters will be accepted for the following categories:

- **Laboratory Investigation** – Experiment based on the scientific method, where a problem is defined, a hypothesis is formed, observations are made to test the hypothesis, and conclusions are drawn from the results. Usually includes pertinent information such as the number of animals in the study, analytical techniques, sampling frequencies or times, and statistical analyses. (Note: Usually requires IACUC approval)
- **Clinical Case** – Discussion of a clinical problem, how the problem was approached, along with steps taken to address or solve the problem (differential diagnoses and diagnostic strategies), important clinical, physical and laboratory findings, final diagnosis and outcome, and any implications for colony or public health.
- **Husbandry/Management** – Define a husbandry or management problem, list the steps (administrative and/or technical) taken to address or solve the problem, objective analysis of the data used to evaluate the success (or failure) of the approach, and recommendations based on the outcome of the study.
- **Animal Welfare, Training, and the 3Rs** – Define an animal welfare/training problem, or identify a potential 3Rs (replace, reduce, refine) opportunity, list the steps (administrative and/or technical) taken to address or solve the problem, objective analysis of the data used to evaluate the success (or failure) of the approach, and recommendations based on the outcome of the study. (Note: May require IACUC approval – check with your IACUC office)

Abstract Preparation & Submission

The purpose of an abstract is to provide a clear and concise summary of the information to be presented in greater detail in a poster. An abstract usually contains some of the major components of a research paper (hypothesis, conclusion), but presents the information in a single paragraph. In preparing your abstract, consider that your audience will have a very diverse expertise. All abstracts should be original work. Sample abstracts from select AALAS meetings are available in the AALAS [Abstract Archive](#).

All abstracts should meet the following criteria:

- **Abstracts should be a single paragraph, not to exceed 300 words.**
- The title (maximum 20 words) should convey the abstract subject matter.
- The abstract body should address specific points based on the abstract type, for example:
 - Laboratory investigations should include hypothesis, methods, results, and conclusions (see [laboratory-investigation-sample-abstract.pdf](#))
 - Clinical abstracts should include problem or event, approach, observations, and conclusions (see [clinical-abstract-sample.pdf](#))

- Husbandry/management abstracts should include problem or event, approach, observations, and conclusions (see [husbandry-management-sample-abstract.pdf](#))
- Animal Welfare, Training and the 3Rs abstracts should include problem or event, approach, observations, and conclusions (see [animal welfare, training and 3Rs sample abstracts.pdf](#))
- As a general rule, abstracts should not contain tables or graphs, and should not contain trade names, technical jargon, names of products, companies/institutions, or abbreviations (other than units of measurement).
- Having a person unfamiliar with the work review the abstract may be helpful in pinpointing problems with the content. Ask a reviewer to check your grammar, punctuation, and spelling before final submission.

All authors will need to complete an [NCB-AALAS Abstract Submission Form](#) that includes the author's name, title, institution, mailing address, e-mail, phone, and whether the study has been approved by your Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (if applicable). **Abstract forms will be accepted up until July 17, 2023. Authors will be notified by the Abstract Review Committee if their abstract has been accepted within 2 weeks of receipt of the submitted abstract.**

Poster Presentation at Symposium

For your poster to be effective, it is critical that the information is conveyed in a clear, concise, and organized manner. Quality photographs, diagrams, and illustrations are crucial elements to a successful poster. Most authors use Microsoft PowerPoint to create their scientific posters. Microsoft has PowerPoint poster templates at: [Science project poster \(office.com\)](#).

Always check with your institution before starting – they may have a required format, color scheme, font, and branding guidelines that you may need to adhere to. ***Also, check with your institution regarding any manuscript clearances you must go through with your legal department before presenting outside of your institution.***

Authors whose abstract has been accepted for presentation at the August 17, 2023 NCB-AALAS Symposium will be provided with a 4 ft. x 8 ft. fabric tackboard on which to mount their poster. Remember to allow space (about 3" x 5") in the upper right-hand corner of the poster board for the poster number. Velcro "hook" side tabs will be provided to apply to the backside of your poster so that it can be hung by pressing the tabs onto the fabric of the poster board.

Authors should plan on setting up their poster between 7:30-8:30 am the day of the symposium. Authors (or their alternate) are asked to present their poster during the Poster Session in the Commercial Exhibit Hall. Judging will be performed by reputable members of the Lab Animal Science Community. Poster awards will be presented at a reception immediately following the Symposium.

Tips for a Successful Poster Design (Best Practices)

- **Poster Elements:** Posters for laboratory investigations typically include the following elements:
 - Title
 - Introduction
 - Objectives
 - Materials & Methods
 - Results
 - Discussion

➤ Conclusions

Posters that feature clinical, husbandry/management, or animal welfare/3Rs topics typically include the following elements:

- Title
- Introduction
- Problem or Event
- Approach
- Observations
- Conclusions

Posters should also include the following sections, as applicable:

- Acknowledgements for any personnel who has contributed to the research, and the names of any entities that helped to fund the research
 - Information regarding IACUC approval from author's institution (if needed)
 - References and literature cited
- **Size:** Common and readable poster sizes are typically 56" W X 42" H or 48" W X 38" H. As a general rule of thumb, viewers should be able to read the smallest font from 6 ft. away.
 - **Colors:** Choose the right color palette – keep it simple and stick with a white background - it uses less ink and is easier on the eyes, *keeping in mind that your institution may have design guidelines that must be followed for outside presentations.*
 - **Titles:** Titles should be short and sweet to grab the attendees' attention. Lettering for the poster title should be at least 1 ½" high, and stick with title fonts like Arial or Helvetica.
 - **Authors:** List the names of the authors under the title lettering. The institutions represented by the authors should be included.
 - **Minor Titles:** Lettering for minor titles should be about 1" high.
 - **Poster Text:** Lettering for the poster text should be a minimum of ⅜" high (~36 point), double-spaced and with 1" margins. Stay away from unprofessional fonts – Serif fonts like Times New Roman work best. Cut down on text as much as possible – posters do not need to contain all the information found in a manuscript. Use bullet points instead of full sentences. As a general rule of thumb, 40% of your poster should be white space!
 - **Figures:** A suggested size for charts, drawings, and illustrations is 11"x14". Consider shortening the titles for figures. For graphs, legends are essential – they should be short and informative.
 - **Pictures:** A picture is worth a thousand words, so incorporate photographs whenever possible. Photographs should be at least 8"x10" in order for significant detail to be seen by the attendees. Photographs with a matte finish will reduce glare and result in better visibility. ***Always check with your institution's legal department to make sure you are in compliance with any photography guidelines.***
 - **Poster Structure:** Present the material in a logical order, keeping in mind most people read from left to right, top to bottom. It will also be easier to read if you justify all text on the left side. A popular way to arrange a poster is to separate the material into 3 columns (see example below).
 - **Copies of Posters:** You are welcome to bring printed copies of your poster to share with attendees. However, if you want to save trees and printer ink, provide the NCB Poster Committee with an electronic copy of your poster and they will send you a unique QR code you can display on your poster that will enable attendees to download on their cell phones.

